

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Do Not Waste Your Ramadān

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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ، وَلَا عُذْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الطَّالِبِينَ، وَأَشْهُدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدُهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، إِقْرَارًا بِهِ وَتَوْحِيدًا، وَأَشْهُدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا مَزِيدًا.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ:

This is a reminder, first and foremost to myself, and then to my brothers and sisters in Trinidad and Tobago, and likewise, to those listening online. It is a small reminder, but a reminder with a strong message nonetheless, and that is: Allah subḥānahu wa ta’ālā has blessed us to reach this Glorious month of Ramaḍān, a month which is filled with Rahmah (mercy), Maǵfirah (forgiveness), and likewise, an opportunity to be able to draw closer to Him subḥānahu wa ta’ālā, and to reach the ultimate goal of Paradise. May Allāh allow us to reach Paradise. Āmīn.

But at the same time, it is a month, that if not utilized and capitalized in a good way, it could work against us, and it can be a wasted opportunity. So, this is a reminder based upon that tremendous ḥadīth:

«عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَعَدَ الْمِنْبَرَ فَقَالَ: آمِينَ، آمِينَ، آمِينَ. فَلَمَّا نَزَّلَ قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّكَ حَيْنَ صَعَدْتَ الْمِنْبَرَ، قُلْتَ: آمِينَ، آمِينَ، آمِينَ».

Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu ‘anhu narrates that the Prophet ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam ascended the pulpit and said: «Āmīn» thrice. When he descended the pulpit, he was asked: O’ Messenger of Allāh! When you ascended the pulpit, you said «Āmīn» thrice.

Wallāhī, brothers and sisters, this is something that makes a person really reflect about the reality of this Month.

«إِنَّ جِبْرِيلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَتَاهُنِي، فَقَالَ: مَنْ أَدْرَكَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ، فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ، فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ، فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، قُلْ: آمِينَ. فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ. قَالَ: وَمَنْ أَدْرَكَ أَبْوَيْهِ، أَوْ أَحَدَهُمَا، فَلَمْ يَبْرُهُمَا، فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ، فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، قُلْ: آمِينَ. فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ. قَالَ: وَمَنْ ذُكِرَتْ عِنْدُهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيْكَ، فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ، فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، قُلْ: آمِينَ. فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ».

«Jibrīl came to me and said: ‘Whoever reaches the Month of Ramaḍān and is not forgiven, then he will enter the Hellfire, and Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā will cast him far away, so say: ‘Āmīn.’ I said: ‘Āmīn.’ Whoever sees his parents in old age, one or both of them, and he does not honor them, and he dies, then he will enter Hellfire and Allāh will cast him far away, so say: ‘Āmīn.’ I said: ‘Āmīn.’ Whoever has your name mentioned in his presence and does not send blessings upon you, and he dies, then he will enter Hellfire and Allāh will cast him far away, so say: ‘Āmīn.’ I said: ‘Āmīn.’»¹

What is the shāhid? The shāhid is the first part of the ḥadīth which is what I wish to discuss with you. The Messenger of Allāh ᷃allallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said: «Jibrīl came to me and said: ‘Whoever reaches the Month of Ramaḍān and is not forgiven, then he will enter the Hellfire, and Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā will cast him far away.» So, how could a person enter

¹ Related by Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Ḥibbān, no. 915. Al-Albānī authenticated it in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tarjīb wa al-Tarhīb, no. 1679.

Ramadān and yet this is his fate? That he will not be forgiven? How are we to understand this ḥadīth? We understand the ḥadīth by the following: This Month, my brothers and sisters, is filled with opportunities to seek Allāh's forgiveness. It is filled with opportunities for your sins to be forgiven. Allāh has given us so many opportunities in this Month, so if a person enters it and still is not forgiven, then we understand from Jibrīl's words that he is a wretched person. Ramadān comes and yet he is not forgiven. With all what we have in Ramadān he is still not forgiven. How could that be?

Allah ta'ālā says:

«شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ»

«The Month of Ramadān in which the Qur'ān was revealed; a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion between right and wrong.»²

Allāh ta'ālā also says:

«إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ. وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ. لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفٍ شَهْرٍ»

«We have certainly revealed (the Qur'ān) in the Night of Qadr. And what will make you know what the Night of Qadr is? The night of al-Qadr is better than a thousand months.»³

How could a person not capitalize on Ramadān? How could Ramadān not be for them when Allāh mentions that the Qur'ān was revealed in this month? When we have a Night that is better than a thousand months?

Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that the Messenger ᷽allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

«إِذَا جَاءَ رَمَضَانُ فُتَحْتُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ وَصُفِّدَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ». وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ: «وَسُلِّسِلَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ».

«When Ramadān comes, the doors of Paradise are open, and the doors of Hellfire are closed, and the Shayāṭīn are restricted» Another narration reads: «The Shayāṭīn are chained».⁴

So, how do we understand, my brothers and sisters, that the doors of Paradise are open and that the doors of Jahannam are closed? The 'ulamā' said this could either be [1] literal, meaning, the actual doors of Paradise are open when Ramadān enters, and the doors of Hellfire are closed. Or, it could mean [2] that because there are so many opportunities to do good, Paradise is open for anyone who seeks the reward, and because people are carrying out actions of obedience, the doors of the Hellfire are closed.

How could we not benefit and how could we not be forgiven when the Messenger of Allāh ᷽allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

«اللَّهُ عُتْقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ».

«Every night there are people that Allāh frees from the Hellfire [and that is in the Month of Ramadān]»⁵.

Proofs after proofs of how we could receive mercy, forgiveness, and salvation from the Hellfire. So, how could it be that this Month comes and we have individuals that do not benefit from it? We ask Allāh for safety. How could a person not be forgiven when the Messenger of Allāh ᷽allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

«مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفرَ لَهُ مَا تَقدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبٍ».

«Whoever establishes prayer during the nights of Ramadān out of sincere faith and in hope of reward, he will be forgiven his previous sins.»⁶

² Qur'an: 2:185.

³ Qur'an: 97:1-3.

⁴ Related by Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.

⁵ Related by al-Tirmidhī.

⁶ Related by Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī no. 37; and Muslim, no. 759.

In a narration:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفْرَانُهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ».

«Whoever fasts the Month of Ramaḍān out of sincere faith and in hope of reward, he will be forgiven his previous sins.»⁷

Now we understand why Jibrīl ‘alayhi ṣalātu wa-salām said:

«مَنْ أَدْرَكَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ، فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ، فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ، فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ».

«Whoever reaches the Month of Ramaḍān and is not forgiven, then he will enter the Hellfire and Allāh will cast him far away.»

«Allāh will cast him far away» Some scholars have said this means he will be removed from Allāh’s Mercy because of these reasons. This is because Allāh, out of His Mercy, has legislated so many things for us in Ramaḍān that even the most wretched person can seek forgiveness and attain salvation from the Hellfire. But with *all* what we have mentioned, Ramaḍān comes, and he has not benefited, Ramaḍān concludes, and he is not among those forgiven, then he must be a truly lost soul.

In Ramaḍān we have an action that will be rewarded without any limit. The Messenger of Allāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said: «All actions are for the son of Ādām except for Fasting, for that is for Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā.»

Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā has mentioned Himself:

«كُلُّ عَمَلٍ أَبْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ إِلَّا الصَّيَامُ، فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ».

«Every deed of the son of Ādām is for him, except fasting; it is for Me and I shall reward it.»⁸

In one narration:

«An action can be multiplied between ten and seven-hundred times except Fasting [for it has no limit].»

Alḥamdu lillāh, in this Month, we can fast, and there is no limit to the reward that Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā gives to His slave. The salaf used to say: this is a blessed Month. It has a Night that is equivalent to a thousand Months. So, whoever is prevented from gaining this great reward, then indeed, this person has been prevented.

We pray to Allāh subḥānahu wa ta’ālā that He does not make us from the heedless who do not capitalize from the Month of Ramaḍān by standing in Prayer. We seek refuge in Allāh ‘azza wa jall from being among those who do not utilize Fasting in order to have their sins forgiven. We pray to Allāh that He makes us among ‘utaqā al-nār (those freed from the Hellfire) every night.

I wish to end by mentioning a final fā’idah and that is when Jibrīl ‘alayhi-salām commanded the Messenger of Allāh to say: Āmīn. After Jibrīl supplicated, he commanded the Messenger to say: Āmīn. The ‘ulamā’ have said: look how severe and dangerous this affair is. Jibrīl ‘alayhi-salām is making du’ā’ against the individual who neither benefits from the Month of Ramaḍān when it comes, nor is he forgiven. And we know that Jibrīl does not do anything except by the command of Allāh. The command is actually coming from Allāh, He is the one who has commanded Jibrīl to make du’ā’ against such individuals. And who is saying āmīn? It is the Messenger of Allāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

Our scholars say: what do you think the state of that person would be? Allāh has commanded Jibrīl to make a du’ā’, and Jibrīl is making it, and Prophet Muḥammad, who is the best of mankind, is saying: āmīn. That person, subḥān Allāh, is in a

⁷ Related by Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī no. 2014.

⁸ Related by Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī no. 1761; and Muslim no. 1946.

very dangerous, dangerous situation. An Angel is making du'ā' against you and Prophet Muḥammad is saying: āmīn. This is something to really, really reflect upon, my brothers and my sisters.

One-third of Ramaḍān has already left us. Strive for what we have left. Day and night. Every hour. Every minute we have – strive. Strive to do those actions that will be pleasing to Allāh, so that Allāh may be pleased with and forgive us, and so that Ramaḍān may be for us. And not that it just passes us by and has no effect upon us.

In conclusion, my brothers and sisters, do not waste your Ramaḍān. Do not be from those individuals that lose out. Be from those individuals who have gained, who are delivered, and who are forgiven of their sins.

We pray to Allāh subḥānahu wa ta'ālā that He makes us from them. And Allāh ta'ālā knows best.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.